

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3442
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 4534

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: POLITICAL TEMPERATURE RISES

SUMMARY: LAST WEEK'S BITTER PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON LOCKHEED AND THE TRAUMATIC OUTBREAK OF ULTRA-LEFT STUDENT VIOLENCE HAVE LEFT THE ALREADY TENSE POLITICAL ATMOSHPERE EVEN MORE HEAVILY CHARGED. THE LOCKHEED VOTE (SPLIT ON STRICTLY PARTISAN LINES) AND MORO'S HARSH ATTACK ON THE PCI HAVE MADE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE POLITICAL PARTIES MORE DIFFICULT. WITHIN THE DC, IT HAS PRODUCED A NEW MOOD OF COMBATIVENESS TOWARD THE PCI, ALREADY MANIFESTED (ON THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE OF PUBLIC ORDER) IN CONCERTED PRESSURES ON THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT THE PARTY'S HARDER LINE. STUNNED BY STUDENT DISAFFECTION, THE PCI SIMILARLY EVIDENCED A HARDENED POSITION AT THIS WEEK'S TROUBLED CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING, PRESAGING NEW PRESSURES TO ADVANCE THE PCI'S DEMANDS FOR FULLER PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH THE SOCIALISTS HAVE RENEWED CALLS FOR A GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD INCLUDE

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ALL "CONSTITUTIONAL PARTIES" (IE. THE PCI AS WELL) BASED ON A "PROGRAMATIC MAJORITY", THE PSI BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE OTHER PARTIES COULD SERVE TO DEFUSE TENSIONS. THE LACK OF POLITICAL ALTERNATIVES TO ANDREOTTI'S MINORITY GOVERNMENT AND UNWILLINGNESS OF ALL THE PARTIES TO CAUSE A GOVERNMENT CRISIS STILL APPEAR SUFFICIENT TO KEEP HEIGHTENED TENSIONS AND

PRESSURES IN CHECK FOR THE MOMENT. ANDREOTTI'S
BILATERAL ENCOUNTERS WITH THE POLITICAL PARTIES
(WHICH BEGIN ON MARCH 21) SEEKING AGREEMENT TO THE
IMF'S ECONOMIC CONDITIONS COULD PROVIDE A CLEAR TEST
OF EACH PARTY'S INTENTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. DC ADOPTS TOUGHER LINE. MORO'S HARDHITTING
DEFENSE OF THE DC AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE LOCKHEED
DEBATE HAS LEFT THE PARTY MORE UNITED THAN EVER
IN ITS OPPOSITION TO FURTHER COMPROMISE WITH THE
PCI. WITH DC ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PCI ALREADY HARDENING
IN RECENT WEEKS, MORO'S SPEECH HAS BEEN WIDELY APPLAUDED,
CONTRIBUTING TO A NEW MOOD OF OPTIMISM AND COMBATIVE-
NESS. IT NO LONGER APPEARS ENOUGH TO BE OPPOSED TO
THE PCI; THE DC NOW SEEMS TO BE ON THE ATTACK.
SUDDENLY, NEARLY EVERYONE SEEMS TO HAVE BECOME A
MOROTEO VOICING AN ANTI-COMMUNIST FANFANIANO LINE.
ACROSS THE DC'S POLITICAL SPECTRUM (WITH THE EXCEPTION
OF THE ANDREOTTIANI AND SOME LEFT-WING BASE LEADERS),
MORO IS BEING TOUTED AS THE PERSONIFICATION OF THE
PARTY AND THE DC'S "ONLY REAL LEADER." WHILE IT WOULD
BE PREMATURE TO DRAW LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS (THE DC
TRADITIONALLY DOES NOT BESTOW ITS LOYALTIES ON ONE
MAN FOR LONG), IT IS EVIDENT THAT, FOR THE MOMENT,
MORO HAS CAPTURED THE PARTY.

2. MORO REFLECTS DC MOOD. THERE ARE UNDOUBTEDLY MANY
FACTORS WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO THE PHENOMENON OF MORO'S
DRAMATIC ASSERTION OF PARTY LEADERSHIP. MASTERFULLY
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DESIGNED AND TIMED, THE IMPACT OF MORO'S SPEECH WAS
ALL THE GREATER FOR ITS UNCHARACTERISTIC FORCEFULNESS
AND DIRECTNESS. EXPLOITING THE BITTERNESS
ENGENDERED BY THE PCI'S ALL-OUT ATTEMPT TO INCRIMINATE
THE DC THROUGH GUI, MORO'S FIRMNESS RESPONDED TO THE
EMOTIONAL MOOD OF THE PARTY, BOTH IN THE CENTER AND
ON THE PERIPHERY. IT ALSO REFLECTED MOUNTING CONCERN
ON THE PART OF MANY THAT THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT
WAS INSUFFICIENTLY FIRM IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE
COMMUNISTS.

3. MORO PROMOTES MORO. ON MORO'S PART, THE SPEECH WAS
PATENTLY DESIGNED TO ADVANCE THE VETERAN LEADER'S
AMBITION TO RETURN TO A POSITION OF HIGH PARTY OR
GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP. HAVING DEPT HIS DISTANCE
FROM ANDREOTTI, MORO POSED AS THE TRUE DEFENDER OF
THE FAITH. SENSING THE CONSERVATIVE MOOD WITHIN THE
PARTY, HE HAS BECOME THE SYMBOL OF A HARDER, MORE
COMBATIVE DC, UNITING BOTH THE DC'S LEFT AND RIGHT

WINGS. SEVERAL SOURCES INDICATE THAT PARTY SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI (WHO HAS REMAINED A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF MORO) WILL STEP DOWN WITHIN A FEW MONTHS CITING REASONS OF HEALTH IN ORDER TO TURN OVER THE DIRECTION OF THE PARTY TO MORO'S FIRM HAND.

4. VIOLENCE PROVIDES DC A RALLYING ISSUE. LAST WEEK'S TRAUMATIC OUTBREAK OF ULTRA-LEFT STUDENT VIOLENCE SEEMS TO HAVE PROVIDED THE DC WITH AN ISSUE WITH WHICH TO MANIFEST THE PARTY'S NEW FIGHTING MOOD. IN EXPLOITING IT, THE DC HAS INCREASED THE DIFFICULTIES OF ANDREOTTI'S FRAGILE GOVERNMENT BY INSISTING ON TOUGHER POLICIES TO REDUCE VIOLENCE AND ASSURE PUBLIC ORDER. THE DC'S STERN CRITICISM OF THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT BEGAN WITH A BLISTERING ATTACK BY FANFANI IN THE SENATE ON THE "EXCESSIVE PRUDENCE" OF THE SECURITY FORCES IN DEALING WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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THE HEAVILY ARMED DEMONSTRATORS WHO RAN AMUCK IN ROME LAST SATUDAY. THE GOVERNMENTS'S WEAKNESS, FANFANI CHARGED, HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR "NOT PREVENTING THE PREVENTIBLE." ON MONDAY AND TUESDAY, ANDREOTTI CALLED ON MORO AND ZACCAGNINI, REPORTEDLY TO PROVIDE ASSURANCES THAT IN THE FUTURE THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE FIRMER MEASURES TO ASSURE PUBLIC ORDER EVEN AT RISK OF COMPROMISING RELATIONS WITH THE PCI. THE DC SENATE AND CHAMBER DIRECTORATES MET TO HEAR INTERIOR MINISTER COSSIGA PROVIDE HIS PERSONAL "GUARANTEE" THAT THE POLICE WOULD PREVENT ANY REPETITION OF LAST WEEK'S EXTREMIST VIOLENCE.

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5. DC PRESSURES ON ANDREOTTI INCREASE. THE DC'S FIGHTING MOOD WAS FURTHER EVIDENCED BY THE DC'S PARLIAMENTARY GROUP DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH THEIR INTENTION TO INTRODUCE DRAFT LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING 48-HOUR PREVENTIVE DETENTION OF PERSONS SUSPECTED OF PLANNING VIOLENCE OR TERRORISM. THE DEPUTIES ANNOUNCED THEIR UNANIMOUS DECISION IN A DOCUMENT WHICH CITED MORO'S "EXEMPLARY SPEECH." THE INITIATIVE WILL FURTHER COMPLICATE ANDREOTTI'S TASK SINCE THE PCI AND PSI HAVE ALREADY DENOUNCED THE PROPOSAL AS AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL DEPRIVATION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES. THE DC PARLIAMENTARIANS CLEARLY FEEL THAT THE PUBLIC MOOD IS WITH THEM; THAT THE PCI HAS ALREADY BEGUN A CAMPAIGN TO TAG THE DC WITH THE BLAME FOR THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE SOCIAL UNREST AND VIOLENCE; AND THAT (IN PICCOLI'S WORDS) IT IS TIME FOR THE PARTIES TO PUT THEIR CARDS ON THE TABLE.

6. PCI POSITION ALSO HARDENING: THE PCI, ALREADY DISCONCERTED BY WORKER DISAFFECTION, APPEARS TO HAVE

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BEEN SEVERELY STUNG BY THE STUDENT VIOLENCE IN BOLOGNA AND ROME. LAST WEEK'S TURMOIL PROVIDED GRAPHIC EVIDENCE THAT ULTRA-LEFT GROUPS (WHICH HAD EFFECTIVELY TARNISHED THE PCI WITH THE TAIN OF DC COLLUSION) HAD MADE DEEP INROADS IN THE PARTY'S YOUTH AND STUDENT CONSTITUENCY. THIS WEEK'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING (ROME 4325 AND 4439) MADE NO ATTEMPT TO CONCEAL THE PARTY'S INCREASING INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES. THESE HAVE CAUSED THE LEADERSHIP TO HARDEN ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE MINORITY GOVERNMENT AND TO STEP UP ITS DEMANDS FOR A MORE FORMAL PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT, POSSIBLY BY ENTERING A LEGISLATIVE MAJORITY BASED ON PROGRAMMATIC ACCORDS ON MAJOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES. CAUGHT IN A POLITICAL DILEMMA, NONETHELESS CONTINUES THAT THE SEVERITY OF THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS MAKES THE CREATION OF A GOVERNMENT CRISIS UNTHINKABLE.

7. SOCIALISTS REVIVE BILATERAL MEETINGS. THE SOCIALISTS HAVE REVIVED THEIR INITIATIVE FOR BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE OTHER PARTIES, WHICH HAD BEEN POSTPONED DURING THE LOCKHEED TURMOIL. THE DC-PSI MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 23, WITH THE COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST ENCOUNTER TO OCCUR THE NEXT DAY. THE MERE RESCHEDULEING OF THESE MEETINGS MAY BE A SIGN THAT POLITICAL TENSIONS, SO RECENTLY STRAINED OVER THE LOCKHEED AND PUBLIC ORDER QUESTIONS, MAY BE DESCENDING TO A MORE NORMAL LEVEL. THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CURRENT PSI DIRECTORATE MEETING MAKE CLEAR THAT THE SOCIALIST ARE STILL BADLY DIVIDED OVER BASIC POLICY MATTERS. THE PSI IS STILL FORMALLY COMMITTED TO USING THE BILATERAL MEETINGS TO DEVELOP A "PROGRAMMATIC MAJORITY" (WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE PCI). INDIVIDUAL PSI EXPONENTS REALIZE, HOWEVER, THAT AT BEST THE MEETINGS MAY LEAD TO DEVELOPMENT

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OF A "MAJORITY PROGRAM" WHICH WOULD PERMIT CONTINUANCE OF THE CURRENT "BENEVOLENT ABSTENTION." THE PSI LEADERSHIP WISHES TO POSTPONE EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE BILATERAL MEETINGS UNTIL AN EARLY APRIL MEETING OF THE PARTY'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE. SUCH A POSTPONEMENT WOULD PROVIDE NEEDED POLITICAL BREATHING SPACE AND HELP REMOVE THE AURA OF TENSION WHICH PRESENTLY PREVAILS.

8. ANDREOTTI BILATERAL PARTY MEETINGS ON IMF WILL TEST INTENTIONS. ALTHOUGH THE HARDENING POSITIONS OF BOTH THE DC AND THE PCI HAVE REDUCED ANDREOTTI'S SPACE FOR MANEUVERING, THE GOVERNMENT'S PARTICULAR STRENGTH STILL LIES IN THE UNWILLINGNESS OF ANY OF THE PARTIES TO PROVIDE A GOVERNMENT CRISIS. POLITICAL TENSIONS HAVE INCREASED, BUT ALL SIDES AGREE THAT ONE DOES NOT PULL THE PLUG IN THE MIDST OF AN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS. WITH THE IMF NEGOTIATIONS JUST CONCLUDED, ANDREOTTI'S MOST DIFFICULT TEST MAY BE JUST BEFORE HIM. ON MONDAY MARCH 21, HE WILL BEGIN BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH ALL THE PARTIES OF THE "NON-SFIDUCIA" SEEKING AGREEMENT TO THE GOVERNMENTS'S LETTER OF INTENT TO MEET THE IMF'S CRITERIA FOR CONTROLLING THE PUBLIC DEBT AND RATE OF INFLATION. SINCE THE TRADE UNION FEDERATION AND THE PARTIES HAVE ALREADY RAISED SERIOUS OBJECTIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT'S FISCALIZATION DECREE, THE CONFRONTATION COULD PROVIDE A CLEAR TEST OF EACH PARTY'S INTENTIONS. THE MEETINGS WILL ALSO SERVE AS A PRELUDE TO PARLIAMENTARY CONSIDERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC DECREE LAWS BEFORE PAR-

LIAMENT RECESSES FOR EASTER.

9. FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, THE LACK OF ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL
ALTERNATIVES TO THE MINORITY GOVERNMENT FORMULA AND THE UNWILLING-
NESS OF ALL THE POLITICAL PARTIES TO PRECIPITATE A CRISIS HAVE
THE HEIGHTENED POLITICAL TENSIONS IN CHECK. SOME CONCLUSIONS,
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HOWEVER, MAY BE DRAWN. LAST WEEK'S EVENTS HAVE MADE ANDREOTTI'S
DELICATE
BALANCING ACT MORE DIFFICULT. THE DC IS CLEARLY RESTIVE AND
APPREHENSIVE THAT THE DETERIORATING ECONOMIC AND SECURITY
SITUATION MAY FORCE ANDREOTTI INTO POLITICAL CONSESSIONS
NOT OF ITS LIKING. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT YET PREPARED TO CONSIDER
ALTERNATIVES, IT PERCEIVES ITSELF IN A STRONGER ELECTORAL
POSITION THAN THE PCI AND IS BEGINNING TO PLAN AHEAD. WHEN
THE TIME COMES, IT WANTS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT COMMUNIST AND NOT
DC INTRANSIGENCE WAS RESPONSIBLE. HENCE THE COMBATTIVE,
"CARDS-ON-THE-TABLE" APPROACH ADVOCATED BY MORO. THE PCI IS IN
A DEEP QUANDRY. ITS MOUNTING INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES HAVE
INCREASED PRESSURED TO SHORTEN ITS TIMETABLE FOR FULL GOVERNMENT
PARTICIPATION. HOWEVER, THE DC'S NEW FIRMNESS MAKES THE EFFORT
MORE RISKY AND COSTLY. BEAUDRY

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